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FOREIGN NEWS ON CITRUS FRUITS

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NOTES ON EUROPEAN MARKETS FOR CITRUS FRUIT

In the following report dated March 23, received in the Foreign Service of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Mr. Edwin Smith, Fruit Specialist of the Bureau in London, discusses the European market for American citrus fruit with special reference to the potential market for grapefruit in Continental Europe.

There has been a general recession in prices for oranges during the past week (March 16 to 23) although Spanish oranges arrived in smaller quantities and the best quality made some advance in prices. Many Spanish oranges in a weak condition sold for lower prices, whereas the best California Navels sold for from 50 cents to 75 cents per box below last week's figure. It is said that people are tired of oranges, since they have had it dinned into their ears since December that they should eat large quantities of oranges to prevent influenza and there is no doubt that consumption has been heavy during the past three months.

Another factor influencing prices has been the increased movement of California oranges from New York since the price of oranges from Spain and Jaffa reached a point to make trans-shipment profitable. California oranges are to be seen in all British markets and this illustrates how fluid supplies are when profits are possible. On the other hand, very few Florida oranges have been purchased for shipment to European markets, so that these are not to be seen. It is probable that the advertising received by California oranges in all British markets has made their importation by buyers on this side of more certain advantage than supplies from other quarters.

Demand for grapefruit continues strong

It is interesting to observe that the grapefruit demand keeps very strong in Great Britain, despite the slower demand for oranges. Grapefruit arrivals continue to be heavy, but prices for bright fruit of satisfactory sizes have held around 18/- to 21/- ($4.38 to $5.11) with an active movement.

An increased interest in grapefruit is being observed in Continental markets, but up to the present time, the quantities must relate to hundreds, not thousands, of cases. Judging from the growth of the trade in boxed apples, which are considered a fancy product, we may expect a growth in

demand for grapefruit on the Continent.

In my reports of 1924-25 I emphasesed to the citrus growers of Florida the fact that they could greatly expand the demand for grapefruit in Great Britain by education and by placing supplies on this side of the Atlantic at moderate prices, between 15/- and 20/- ($3.65 and $4.87). This advice at present applies to Continental markets with the same degree of truth that it applied to British markets in 1924. Moderately priced transportation, uniformly good quality of supplies and medium-priced supplies for the Continent are factors which will increase the use of grapefruit as no other means of stimulation can. The provision of these requirements, together with the spread of education on the use of grapefruit in countries like Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia, all depend upon the united effort of the industry.

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